Cost of Escalation of Railway Projects

*38. SHRI K. MOHANAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for cost escalation by about Rs. 115 crores over the original estimates in two railway projects namely—coversion of the Samastipur-Barabanki-Lucknow into broad gauge and the New Bongaigaon-Guwahati broad gauge line construction;

(b) what is the average cost escalation ratio in all such railway projects;

(c) if not, what is the average cost escalation ratio; and

(d) what are the details of steps taken by Government to control cost escalation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) The increase in the cost of these gauge conversion Projects is expected to be much more than Rs. 115 crores and has been mainly on account of the escalation in prices of labour and materials, during the prolonged period of execution of these projects, and partly due to provision of a few additional works/facilities subsequently considered necessary in the changed circumstances, for which no provision had been made in the original estimates.

(b) and (c) Cost escalation varies considerably from project to project, depending on period of completion which is affected by the availability of resources, and the extent of inflation during the period of construction. It also depends to some extent on the changing needs of the situation warranting variation in scope of work. Resources constraint is most severe for gauge conversion and new line Projects due to inadequate allocation of resources and heavy commitments on hand resulting in comparatively higher cost escalation for these type of projects.

(d) Efforts are continuously made to get more resources for early completion of on-going projects and new projects are kept to the minimum, so as not to spread the resources thinly.

Functioning of Ramagundam and Singrauli Thermal Power Stations

*39. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state:

(a) what was the power generation capacity of the Ramagundam thermal power generation stations have been mal power stations during 1983-84 and 1984-85, separately and the power actually generated by these stations;

(b) whether all the units in these power generation on stations have been functioning during this period;

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) what steps have been taken by Government to avoid frequent close-down of power generation units in these stations?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) At Ramagundam, the total installed capacity under commercial operating during 1983-84 and 1984-85 was 200 MW and 400 MW respectively. The actual generation in 1983-84 was 103 million units at a plant load factor of 69.2 per cent. In 1984-85 the actual generation was 1347 3 million units and the PLF was 54.4 per cent. At Singrauli, the total installed capacity under commercial operation during 1983-84 and 1984-85 was 800 MW and 1000 MW respectively. The actual generation in 1983-84 was 3082.5 million units at a plant load factor of 58.5 per cent. In 1984-85 the actual generation was 5199.7 million units and the PLF was 61.4 per cent.

(b) to (d) Unit I at Ramagundam had to be taken out during 1984-85 for a total of 50 days due to grid restrictions. At Singrauli the units are being taken out one by one for rectification work on their generator stators by BHEL. A time bound programme to rectify all the generator stators is being implemented.

Effects of Exposure of Bhopal Gas Victims to Thiocynates

*40. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a medical survey of the Bhopal victims recently conducted by a team of doctors from Kem Hospital, Bombay, showed a very high level of thiocyanates in the sub-soil take and filtered water and their continued exposure to thiocyanates causes adverse functioning of the body organs, thus nullifying the effect of the treatment being given to gas victims, and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to ensure decontamination of potable water and also to prevent this continuous medical hazard to the people of Bhopal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) and (b) Government are aware of the observations of a group of doctors about the existence of a high level of thiocynate in the water-level of Bhopal and about the possible health hazards arising out of the continuing exposure of the population to such high levels of thiocyanate.

The Government of Madhya Pradesh have informed that they have very carefully checked up and analysed the water-samples in Bhopal. The analysis indicates that the thiocyanate leve in the tap-waters and lake-waters in Bhopal is well within the safe limits. As such the Question of taking any special decontamination measures does not arise.

Encroachment of Railway Land

119. SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that vast areas of railway land have been encroched in Rjkot, Surendranagar, Wankaner, Jamnagar in Sourashtra; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANSI LAL): (a) The Government is aware that certain small pockets consisting of 0.227 hectares of land have been encroached upon in Rajkot, Surendranagar, Wankaner and Jamnagar in Saurashtra. The encroachments are on land released on conversion of the Railway line from Metre Gauge to Broad Gauge on Viramgam-Okha-Porbandar sections.

(b) Eviction proceedings have been instituted in all cases. In some cases, however, parties have gone to the Court and have brought stay order. These cases are also being contested.

National awards to rail drivers and guards

120. SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) What are the details of national awards so far given to train drivers, guards and other railway personnel whose prompt and brave actions averted major accidents in railways;

(b) whether his Ministry has ever recommended such names to the appropriate authorities for the grant of national awards; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANSI LAL): (a) to (c) Information is being collected from the